

Child Study Team Checklist for Initial Student Review

_____ **Has this child ever been referred to the CST?**

Prior referral may indicate a historical disturbance or long term problem and therefore a more serious situation, especially if the same pattern exists. Situational disturbances, with no prior problems usually have a better prognosis.

_____ **Do we have any prior psychological, educational, language etc evaluations?**

This information is very important so that child is not put through unnecessary testing. These reports also offer the team another perspective on the problem.

_____ **What are the comments from past teachers?**

Never assume that the child is always the problem. Obtaining comments from past teachers may give a different picture and may also help pinpoint the changes that have led to the referral. A child who has had positive teacher feedback for the past four years and all of a sudden begins to deteriorate may have experienced something over the summer, experienced changes in the home or may be having a personality conflict with the teacher.

_____ **Is anyone familiar with other family members?**

Family patterns of behavior may help define contributing factors to the child's problem. It may also offer the team some experience on the best approach to take with this family.

_____ **What is going on at home?**

Many symptoms in school may be the result of tension or problems emanating from the home. If confused as school related problems the true issue will be overlooked and you will be treating symptoms, not problems. Home issues affect every child and some more than others. A brief conversation by the classroom teacher can possibly find out situational disturbances (brief, but intense patterns of tension i.e. loss of a job, death of a relative, separation etc.) that may be causing the child to have difficulty focusing or performing in school.

_____ **What does the developmental history look like?**

A child's developmental history can be like a fingerprint in determining possible causes or influences that may be contributing to the present problem. A thorough intake that covers all areas of a child's history is a crucial factor in the proper diagnosis of a child's problems. A look at developmental milestones, traumatic experiences, hospitalizations, prior testing etc. offer us a closer look at the total child.

_____ **Are there any medical issues we need to be aware of at this time that might impact on this case?**

These issues are crucial and the existence of medical problems should always be determined first. Difficulties with hearing, eyesight, taking medication, severe allergies etc. may be significant contributors to poor performance and may be masked as "unmotivated", "lazy", "stubborn", and so on.

_____ **When was the last time both vision and hearing were checked?**

These two factors should be ruled out immediately as having any influence on the presenting problem. If the child has not been evaluated in either area within at least one year, or symptoms indicate possible visual or auditory involvement i.e. squinting, eye fatigue, failure to hear directions etc. then a retest is indicated.

_____ **Has anyone observed this child?**

The observation should always be a piece of the contributing information presented to the CST. One member, usually the psychologist, social worker, guidance counselor, or special education teacher, should observe the child in a variety of situations prior to the first CST meeting. It is very important for the team to know how this child functions in structured and unstructured settings.

_____ **Do we have samples of his class work?**

Samples of class work over a period of time offer a clearer overview of the child's abilities and attitude towards class work. This also gives several team members an opportunity to observe possible academic symptoms that may first appear in written work.

_____ **Has the parent been notified of the teacher's concerns?**

he team should not be the one to notify the parent that a problem may exist. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to alert the parents that he/she is concerned and would like a closer look by the CST. A parent does not have a legal right to refuse such a request since it is considered a normal school procedure. The parent should also be notified by the teacher that someone from the team will be in touch with them to gather more information and to review any findings.